RESTORATION *Review*

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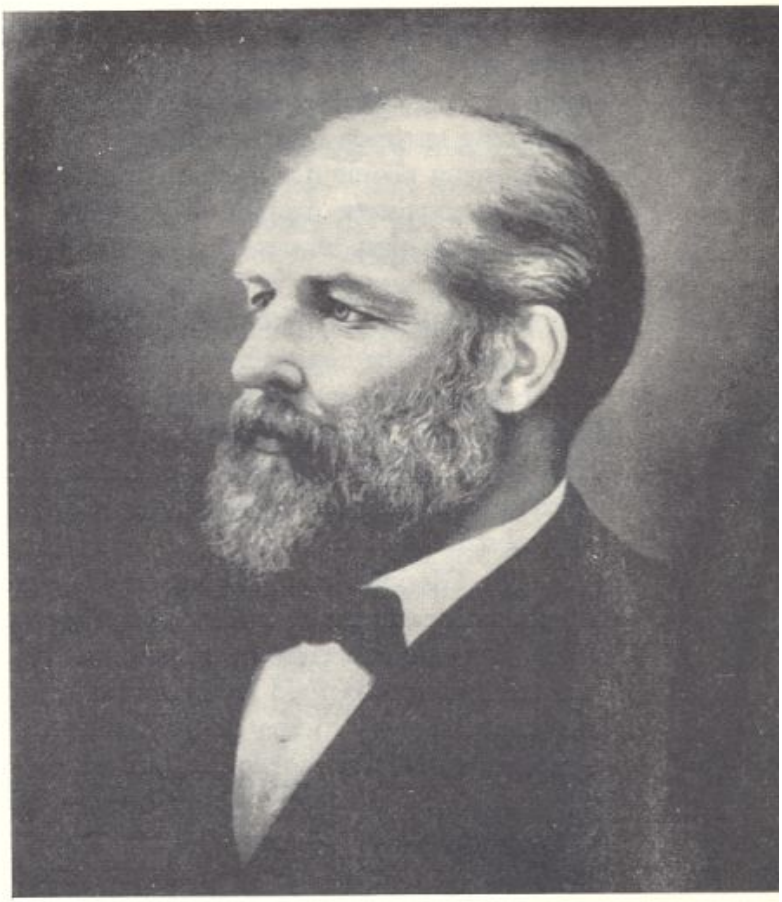
JAMES A. GARFIELD: "CAMPBELLITE PRESIDENT"



I am a member of the Disciple Church, sometimes called "Campbellites," though we acknowledge no other name than Christians or Disciples of Christ. I try not to be a religious partisan, and I call all men my brethren who acknowledge and follow Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men.—*James A. Garfield,* 20th President of the United States (Assassinated in Washington, D. C., in 1881).

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JAMES A GARFIELD: "CAMPBELLITE" PRESIDENT

In 1866, the year that Alexander Campbell died, James A. Garfield, then a Congressman from Ohio, used his influence to get a government job for Henry T. Anderson, a gospel minister from Kentucky, so that the preacher might support himself as an evangelist in the Washington area. Garfield humorously referred to this event as "a conspiracy to get the ancient Gospel preached in the City of Washington according to the principles of the people known as Disciples."

Garfield was in Washington for eighteen years as a Representative before ascending to the presidency in 1881, being the year of his assassination, having served only a few months as Chief Executive. During those eighteen years he was living testimony that a politician can be an active and devoted church worker. As many people did in that day, he kept a diary of his activities, which reveals his consistent support of the little "Campbellite" church in Washington. The congregation was still assembling in private homes when he first went there, and it was only with his help that the little group was able to purchase a house of their own from the Methodists.

This was the beginning of what is now the National City Christian Church, which honors the president's role in its history by preserving what is called "the Garfield pew." During his long service in Washington he was not only always in his pew, or nearly always, but he also assisted in preaching and teaching. One Washington observer reported that Garfield was teaching a Bible class "at a very obscure church."

The Disciples were not exactly "obscure" at this time, for even then they numbered nearly a half million; but they were then, as they are now, comparatively few in number in the eastern part of the nation. Disciple historians of today attribute to Garfield credit for acquainting the nation with the "Campbellite" movement by means of his position as president. It was not that he was simply a part of the movement, but that he himself had long been a preacher of the gospel and a teacher of religion in a Disciple college. For a preacher to become president of the United States not only gave stature to the Disciple plea, but it had a salutary effect upon all Protestant bodies, giving them hope that the day had dawned for a deeper religious faith in America. With Col. Ingersoll stumping the country for atheism and with agnosticism gaining ground on all fronts, a religious-minded president was warmly welcomed. That his election to the presidency was *providential* was a rather common view.

It would be expected that Garfield would be sensitive about any intimation that his eminent position might be used to support any particular religious cause. He wrote to a preacher friend that the Disciples should not make "too much fuss" over his election, and

that they certainly should not look to him as a promoter of their views while president of the United States. Yet he was willing for the Disciples to gain any rewards that might come by the way. He wrote: “Let us not flaunt ourselves in the face of the American people, as though we had made a special conquest but, by modesty and moderation, bear our part worthily and take whatever resulting advantages may come.” But some Disciples interpreted this as a forfeiture of his unusual opportunity to disseminate the principles of the Reformation.

Even during the few months that he was president he was always present for worship at the humble meetinghouse at Vermont Ave. and M street, which led to a phenomenal increase in the attendance, a development that was distasteful to Garfield. He once wrote: “Attended Church with Mother and Crete. The usual crowd outside and in. It gives me a sorry view of human nature to see a little church filled to double its usual attendance by the accident of one of its frequenters having been elected to high office.” Another time he wrote of there being at church “a great and annoying crowd.”

It was after his election to the presidency that the Disciples in Washington undertook to erect their first meeting-house, and Garfield is surely the only president in history to have had a hand in planning a church building for Washington. He cautioned the brethren not to build too large a house: “let us keep within our means and also avoid anything like ostentation, either in size or decoration.” The cornerstone of that building was laid on the first anniversary of Garfield’s assassination, and it became known as “Garfield Memorial Church,” and still stands as part of the property of the National City Christian Church.

Garfield was an admirer of Alexander Campbell as most Disciples of his time were. We know of at least one visit he made to the Campbell Mansion. He was so impressed with the Sage of Bethany that he went to Bethany to check on the prospects of attending Bethany College, though he finally decided to go to Williams College. At Williams he was greatly impressed with the famous Mark Hopkins, but when it came to theology he depicted Hopkins as but an infant alongside “our dear brother Campbell.”

Of Campbell he wrote in his diary: “I must say he is a living wonder. When in his company you feel the shadow of greatness falling upon you; he is a new man every time you meet him, for his mind seems to be taking a sweep through the universe and is enlightening new objects at every inch of its orbit. Thus far in his course, systems have been crushed before him, truth has blazed around and peace and righteousness have followed in his train.” It was Garfield’s conviction that Alexander Campbell’s work was the greatest light to break forth during the nineteenth century.

History acknowledges Garfield to have been an astute statesman, winning ground no less by strong intelligence than uncompromising honesty. Had he lived he might well have become one of America’s most productive presidents, for at the time of his death there were many important reforms about to be inaugurated. He was shot in the Washington

railway station by a disappointed office-seeker, and died eighty days later, Sept. 19, 1881, becoming the second president to be assassinated.

The story of his life illustrates how a man's views tend to mellow as he grows older and wiser. As a youth he was a militant pacifist, but before the Civil War was over he was a general in the Union army. While still in college he was convinced that religion and politics do not mix, resolving to give his life to the preaching of the gospel while turning his back upon politics. But becoming convinced while a soldier of the need of dedicated Christian statesmen, he went on to become a state senator, U. S. representative, and president. He holds the distinction of having been elected to the U. S. Senate and to the presidency in the same year.

There is no question but what Garfield was at one time a recognized minister of the gospel, despite the fact that some of his biographers attempt to ignore it. He was in fact during the 1850's considered "one of the foremost preachers among the Disciples in the Western Reserve (now Ohio). He both attended and served as teacher and president of Hiram College. He not only preached throughout the Reserve, but he conducted funerals, weddings, and baptisms. He was even a debater for the Disciple cause, for on one occasion at least he was selected to answer the challenge of John Denton, a freethinker, a highly intelligent enemy of religion who made it his practice to issue a challenge to debate after each of his speeches, something the Disciples could not long endure.

Garfield's preparation for this debate has an amusing note. Not only did he read everything on science and religion that he could get his hands on, but be sent one of his friends to take notes on Denton's lectures! It was a debate on the claims of the evolutionary theory, which had been influencing intellectual circles for sometime. Charles Darwin's famous book on the *Origin of Species* appeared at about this time. Garfield argued for the miracle of creation as recorded in Genesis, while Denton contended for the validity of the nebular hypothesis. The smallest crowds numbered more than 700. Interestingly enough, as Garfield grew older and became more liberal he developed a very sympathetic attitude toward the evolutionary theory.

This debate was probably a turning point in Garfield's life. Not only did it enhance his standing with the Disciples, who compared his contest with Denton to that of Campbell's with Robert Owen, but it gave him prominence throughout the Reserve. It is a reasonable speculation that had Garfield not had that debate he would have continued as a teacher at Hiram College and a preacher of the gospel, and would never have become president. Only God knows which would have been better for him.

The debate also led him to a broader view of religion, for he literally read his way to an ecumenical position on Christianity. He was soon calling for more attention to the great principles of religion rather to doctrinal derails. He became so "undenominational" as to suppose that the Disciples themselves had become sectarian. This was of course long

before the Restoration Movement began to divide itself into a score of fragmentary sects. There is no question but what Garfield was always dedicated to the cause of Christ, and it is certain that he never gave ground to scepticism or infidelity, but he surely became far too "liberal" for most of the brethren of his time. But he probably went no further than an Alexander Campbell would go when as a Congressman he wrote: "I try not to be a religious partisan, and I call all men my brethren who acknowledge and follow Christ as the Son of God and the Savior of men." But he was too far out when he urged ministers to teach their people how to live in all spheres of life, whether business, political, economical.

He once admitted: "I recognize the fact that my general views of religion have broadened, but I hope they have not weakened my faith in the central doctrines of Christianity. I care less for denominational doctrines, but more for the spirit of Christ."

He had that insatiable thirst for knowledge that usually leads one to more liberal views. He once had breakfast with Col. Robert Ingersoll, the agnostic, concerning which he wrote that he was interested in "studying the peculiarities of his remarkable mind." He saw Ingersoll as both poetic and prejudiced. He dared to read stuff like Renan's *Life of Jesus,* which rejects the deity of Christ, claiming that "it is pleasant to read the views of a strong man with whom you disagree."

President Garfield was a Christian statesman in the finest meaning of that term. He was himself a noble example of what it means to be a Christian. He was above the littleness and cheapness that is too often found in political careers. After almost a century American history honors him as a devoted, high-minded leader. He believed in the equality, dignity, and freedom of the individual, often making reference to "the importance of man and the dignity of labor." He was well ahead of his day in pleading for equal rights for Negroes. He saw democracy as the means of achieving the greatest attainable perfection of each citizen. Government is for man, not man for the government; and the purpose of social order is individual freedom, and so the power of government must be subordinated to the happiness and rights of the citizen.

He speaks to our time when he warns against two extremes: extreme individualism and regimented collectivism. He was also more vocal than most statesmen on the principle of separation of church and state. He stressed the moral obligation to be reasonable and intelligent, and he certainly registered his protest against anti-intellectualism in religion. He had faith in the common man, believing that he can build homes, schools and churches that can cultivate the best that is in man, accenting his intellectual and moral capabilities.

Americans in general and in particular can be thankful for James A. Garfield, "Campbellite" president. And they can hope that Lyndon B. Johnson, who succeeded to the presidency while this article was being prepared, and who is the second president

within the Disciple tradition, will stand magnificently alongside James A. Garfield in responsible Christian statesmanship.

(In the preparation of this article I am especially indebted to *James A. Garfield: His Religion and Education*, by W. W. Wasson, Tennessee Book Co., Nashville,) — the Editor

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NOTES ON A WORLD TOUR (Part 2)

LEROY GARRETT

Taiwan is indeed a grand *experiment.* For a decade now our government has given Free China an average of 100 million dollars a year, and Christian missions and private enterprise have dumped many more millions into the economy. Such liberality should payoff, and it is paying off, for Taiwan is both free and prosperous. The big question is whether the Chinese will be able to go it alone anytime soon. The target date for the withdrawal of U. S. aid is somewhere around 1970, and the hope is that by that time the economy will be strong enough to stand on its own. In our interview with diplomatic officers at our embassy in Taipei the view was expressed by an economic expert that Taiwan would soon be financially independent, especially if big industry and exports continue to grow as they have.

But the experiment involves more than U. S. Dollars. There is a drama taking place between opposing ideologies. We must look to Taiwan as a hopeful show-piece for democracy in Asia. Unlike Japan that has long been a powerful nation, Taiwan is a small, under-developed island that stands as the last vestige of a Free China. China is lost except for Taiwan. It is therefore very important as to what happens to Taiwan. If, in contrast to what appears to be the case in Red China, Taiwan becomes an oasis of peace and prosperity amidst a desert of poverty and oppression, it will serve as an important example to the other countries of Asia.

I was fortunate enough to have considerable contact with the Taiwanese and Chinese at all levels of society, from Chiang Kai-Shek to the humble pedicab driver. The audience with the president of the Republic of China called for the protocol that is usually required when visiting with a head of state. We professors were accompanied by U. S. Ambassador Wright as well as Cultural Attache Pardee Lowe. Once we passed the security guards into the spacious presidential palace, we waited in a large outer office for the appearance of the generalissimo. Generals, interpreters, and diplomats were scurrying around as we waited, as people always must in meeting a king or the like. We were told to do as the ambassador did in greeting the president, which meant to assume the respectful stance when Chiang Kai-Shek entered the room.

The interview was not particularly important, for it could hardly be a discussion of issues, but only a reciprocal manifestation of respect and goodwill. The president briefly reviewed the circumstances that brought him and his government to Taiwan, and he commented upon the progress made since that time, but apologized for the things one must endure who comes from a prosperous country like America. He expressed hope that we had had a good look at Free China. He called for statements from some of us, and there were four of us, including myself, that got into the act of talking with the president. My words were strictly courtesy remarks in that I expressed regret that we could not be with Madame Chiang, a woman educated in our country and loved and respected by Americans. Through his most capable interpreter he thanked me and went on to say some interesting things about his wife, mainly revealing that she was ill, a fact not publicly revealed, and added that she had expressed regrets at not being able to be with the American professors' as she had the year before.

Obviously nothing very profound was said, but we *had* met and shaken hands with a world figure, and even talked with him, an experience gratifying to us all. Several of us agreed that the most significant thing about the meeting was the apparent abundant health of the president. Stories were out that he was appearing in public so seldom because of bad health, but he was both animated and robust when we saw him. He could hardly have looked better for a man moving into his mid-70's.

There is the often-asked question of what is to happen when Chiang passes on, one that we asked in our interview at the U. S. Embassy. The official opinion is that the vice-president will move up to the presidency. A popular opinion is that Chiang's son will ascend to the throne, but our officials in Taipei think this unlikely, and they also think that Madame's role will be a subdued one after the death of her husband. The Embassy does not anticipate any further "family problem" in the Chinese government.

One educator with whom I talked, the father of one of our students at Texas Woman's University and a refugee from the mainland, revealed unusual knowledge of American politics and foreign policy, being quite a specialist in Asian politics. Knowing nothing about my own partisan views, he sharply criticized the policies of the Kennedy administration. Our president is not sufficiently aware of the communist threat, he thinks, and he is too slow to react against it. Kennedy is an opportunist who is concerned mainly with *getting* reelected. *Since* the president knows that Americans do not want war, he appeases this wish by taking chances with communistic aggression. The president should *stop* Communism at any price, he told me. He sees Cuba as a catastrophe and views all of South American as in peril, and he blames Kennedy. By the same delayed action Kennedy has virtually handed Southeast Asia into communistic hands. The American president is power-conscious and is willing to compromise with the Russians in order to gain the

image of a peacemaker and thus endear himself to the American voter, he told me as if he were sure he knew his man.

He told me of how Communism in China had taken from him his home, his art treasures, his future and his job, as well as his wealth and security, and separated him from many of his loved ones and his homeland. I studied this intelligent man as he sat there recounting his life in China to me. He has been in Taiwan for 14 years as a refugee, having left his home to escape Chicom oppression. He is now not quite at the retirement age, which means his most profitable years have been lost. He taught in three universities in China, but in Taiwan there was no job for him. “This man knows something about Communist oppression while most of us in America do not,” I said to myself. No wonder he thinks we are stupid to let this world menace come to our very doorstep with only token protest on our part!

I talked with pedicab drivers, soldiers, mothers, students, scientists, merchants — all sorts of Chinese people. They are as delightful a folk as one could expect to find anywhere. They talk less than we do and eat less; they usually take a siesta at mid-day due to the tropical heat; most of them have work and no one is starving, though the standard of living is still far too low; there is lots of poverty. A Chinese soldier that I met at a Mandarin movie (with English sub-titles) knew enough English, and was gracious enough, to invite me to his home. As a captain in Chiang’s army he makes the equivalent of $15 U. S. per month. To get to his home, which turned out to be what we would call a shack, we walked through sections of Taichung that were poverty stricken. I saw merchants closing their small shops, converting them into sleeping quarters, with several youngsters crawling into one bamboo bed, and in some cases the entire family crowded into one such bed. Children play in narrow, crowded, dirty streets; there are no parks, at least I never saw one nor heard of any. We passed by a community latrine, and the soldier explained that it was the toilet for 50 families; another such toilet would be a few furlongs away for another 50 families. There was a community fountain from which they carried their water, but they did have electric lights, and the soldier had both a radio and an electric fan, proud and expensive possessions. He learned his English by listening to lessons on the radio!

All across Asia I found myself quite a novelty to the natives, for I was often off the beaten track of tourists, so many who saw me were seeing an American for one of their very first times. In the back streets of Taipei I noticed people coming out of their houses up and down the block to get a look at me as I made my way into the home of a family with a daughter in our university. Though they watched intently, their waves and hello’s, sometimes in English, indicated their friendliness. Sometimes I would stop to play with the kids in the streets, communicating with them the best I could Frequently it was difficult to get away from them, for they would follow me as I walked on through the back streets.

Many times I would show a gang of 20 or 30 children the wallet pictures of my wife and three adopted children, hanging on to my wallet the best I could.

On several occasions when I did this it would attract the attention of the adults, who would come to take a look, and in turn explain to the children which one was “mama” (the same in all languages) and which ones were Phoebe, Philip, and Ben. Only by hurrying away could I escape, and once in Agra, India, I could not get away from about 50 children however much I tried. They so crowded me that I once grew fearful they might unintentionally harm me. I tripped over them a few times and struggled to maintain my possessions, for they yanked things from my pockets and pawed at my clothes as if I were a creature from another planet. It was only when disturbed adults came out to chase the kids away that I was able to get back to the tourist bus. I had the bad habit of walking to the back streets and alleys, away from the usual tourist attractions, in order to see how the people really lived, and that was one time I was glad to get back all in one piece. On that same walk I saw a woman taking a bath right out in the street. But that was India and I’m getting ahead of myself, though I’ll never get it all told.

I looked in vain for worship services of any segment of our disciple brotherhood while in Taichung. Different groups of our people have mission stations in Taiwan, but no work has yet reached Taichung insofar as I found out. I was attracted to a gathering that advertized itself simply as “Christian Meeting Place” in both English and Chinese. Though the services were all in Chinese, I was blessed by gathering with these Christians. I shall never forget how they sang, “All for Jesus, All for Jesus,” in their beautiful Chinese language. There were several things about the way they worshiped and the way they believed that made me feel much at home. One of the sisters knew English, so she filled me in on what kind of people I had discovered.

The most notable feature is the distinction they make between a worship service only for Christians and a gospel service for non-Christians. They have both each Sunday, but to the Christian meeting where the Lord’s Supper is served only baptized believers are invited. This service differs from the gospel meeting in that there is no preaching, only voluntary remarks from different male members. In some of our British and American churches, including our own Wynnewood Christian Chapel in Dallas, this would be called mutual edification. At this Christian meeting the seats are rearranged to form a square, with the Lord’s Table at the center, and all the service is directed toward remembering the Lord’s death and resurrection. There is no instrumental music; the sisters remain silent and have their heads covered (a covering is furnished, so they are all alike). By “baptized believer” they mean one who has been immersed into Christ. They are very evangelical, speaking often of what the Christ did for them at Calvary.

The gospel meeting, conducted each Sunday morning (the other is in the afternoon) consists mainly in preaching the gospel, but there is also singing and prayers, and in this service an organ is used! There were one hundred or more attending these gospel services, while the Christian meeting had no more than thirty or forty saints.

I said to myself: "Why is not this also a Church of Christ?" I asked some of the orthodox brethren this question while in Taipei, explaining in detail what I had found, but the reaction I got was that it was just as sectarian as any of the other "denominational churches." But to the sister at the "Christian Meeting Place" I said: "Tell these brethren that once they have evangelized Taiwan I would like for them to come to America!"

I spoke several times to different groups of non-instrument Churches of Christ while in the city of Taipei. It was a sad experience to find brethren of the Restoration Movement divided in such crucial areas as China and Japan. Can a divided world be expected to heed the call to the one Lord from a divided Church?

INDIA

Though I had long heard about the adverse circumstances of India, I was hardly prepared for what I saw. Beggars hounded the tourists there more than any other place I visited. I saw families sleeping on the street in front of the hotel where I stayed in New Delhi. In the eating places I had the feeling that nothing was really clean, and generally I saw such poverty that it distressed me and made me feel helpless. Mothers with babies would stand at the bus windows and point to their mouths, indicating they were hungry. On the 80-mile journey by bus to Agra to see the Taj Mahal I saw such stark poverty that it was hard to believe. My thought was: *is it just for this nation to be in such abject want while so many nations of earth are rich?* That bus journey convinced me that nearly all Americans are indeed rich people!

When I registered my reactions to India to an Indian professor who teaches at the University of London with whom I sat on my flight to Lebanon, he replied: "Oh, you saw the most prosperous part of India. You should have seen Calcutta." He pointed out that in Calcutta and some other Indian cities people actually die in the streets of starvation. The professor listed for me the most pressing problems of his native land as having this order: (1) overpopulation, which is the root of most of the problems, for any progress made is more than swallowed up by the population explosion; there are now nearly 400 millions, and it is figured that by about 1980 there will be upward of one billion; (2) unemployment; there are simply too many people and too few jobs; (3) lack of education; the population increases faster than they can build schools; also lack teachers and money; (4) religious division; difficult to get anything done since Hindus, Moslems, and Buddhists will have so little to do with each other; lots of prejudice, superstition, ignorance.

The point was brought home to me that it is so understandable how a nation like India might turn to Communism — or to *anything* that might offer some relief from her agonies.

Yes, I saw the Taj Mahal and found it as splendid as I expected. One writer says that it is worth the trip to India just to see the magnificent palace of marble. But there seemed to me to be something contradictory about it all, such rich magnificence in a sea of poverty. I just cannot quite forget India, and it is not the Taj Mahal that lingers with me. I returned home convinced that the woman statesman, whose name slips me, is right who contends that all developed nations should give 5% of their gross national product and thus save nations like India. Presently our country is giving hardly 1% in aid to under-developed nations.

HOLY LAND

The flight from New Delhi to Beirut in Lebanon was one of the longest legs of my journey. The freshness and comparative prosperity of Beirut was a welcome change from the dismal experiences in India. Much of the city is new, with bright brick apartment houses gracing long stretches of the coast along the Mediterranean. The streets are wide and have ample motorized traffic. The whole atmosphere appeared more “western” than oriental, though supposedly I was now midway between East and West. The Europeans call this part of the world the Near East, which it is to them, but we might more properly refer to it as the Middle East.

The Mediterranean Sea impressed me with its majesty as much as with its historicity. I was in no particular mood for bathing, but I just had to walk out into the famous sea and let her persuasive waves bear me back. I gathered a few shells that lay buried in the clean sand. One can do a lot of thinking as he looks out over those blue, salty waters. He can recall Jonah fleeing from the call of God or Paul hastening to the call of God. And the many shipwrecks — and the stories they could tell. By the way, those ships may yet tell part of their stories, for archaeologists hope to learn much more about ancient cultures by recovering some of the many ships that lay sleeping in the Mediterranean.

On my flight from Beirut to Jerusalem aboard Jordanian Airlines I got a good look at Damascus, and I was able to spot the approximate place of Paul’s fantastic experience with the heavenly light. Throughout the 40 minute flight I kept my nose against the window in an effort to absorb as much as possible of the land that I heard, dreamed, and read so much about. It was far more barren and desolate than I thought it would be. There were times when I could not spot a single tree or blade of grass or anything *alive* as far as I could see in all directions. It was anything but “a land flowing with milk and honey.” In was rather sandy, barren, hilly, and rugged-and desolate! But of course a lot has happened to it in the past 3,000 years. That the Turks made it a point to destroy every tree during their attacks would be one factor.

Jerusalem was of course a fabulous experience. I tried to make every hour count of the three days I was there. I walked through the city time and again, visiting the celebrated "holy places" as I had opportunity. I was disappointed to find so much commercialization. One merchant emphasized for me that "this is the holiest place in the world" and so I should fill my suitcases with souvenirs. I got the impression that everybody was after my money. I purchased almost nothing at all while there, so disgusted was I with what I saw. Even the guides would make it a point to Stop off with their parties at the gift shops, getting a percentage of course of all the money spent. I finally dropped the guides and went on my own, though incessantly bothered by someone with something to sell.

I journeyed the ten miles or so to Bethlehem and saw the Church of the Nativity, the traditional spot of the Messiah's birth. Then I went to Bethany and descended into the tomb of Lazarus, which may well be authentic. Then to Qumran to visit the ruins of one of the Essene communities and to see the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found. I did considerable work about all this while at Harvard, so it was quite an experience to see the layout in its stark reality. But it was terribly hot and humid and barren and deserted. I know now just how barren the wilderness of Judea is, and I thought of John the Baptist, for he preached in the very area where I was visiting. It is quite possible that he was brought up by the very Essene community that once flourished alongside the Dead Sea, or one like it. In any event John remained in the wilderness until it was time for him to be manifested to Israel. For a great preacher of God to do his work in such a desolate area shows that God's ways are so unlike our own — "*that your faith should be in the power of God rather than in the wisdom of men.*" Most of us would have sent the Baptist to some place like Athens or Rome.

Within the city of Jerusalem itself I walked the traditional "way of the cross," which leads to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, where one can see the supposed spot where our Lord laid in his death. A short distance away is the Garden Tomb which also claims to be the place, but which probably is no older than the Byzantine period. Three "catholic" faiths maintain the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and keep a constant vigil with some kind of service. They are the Coptic, Greek, and Roman churches, if I recall correctly. One is reminded as he visits Jerusalem that it is a "holy city" nor only for Christians but for Jews and Moslems as well. Various descendants of both Ishmael and Isaac may be seen moving through the busy, narrow streets of the old city. The Bedouins struck me as especially interesting. And there was a Bedouin woman who came near striking me most literally, for she thought I had taken her picture as she carried a jar of water from the pool of Siloam. A guide explained that she feared I would show her picture to many people and say bad things about her. She fairly blessed me Out in an unknown tongue, and it is just as well that I'll never know what she said. I had only aimed my camera in her direction in hopes of getting the shot I wanted of the pool. A shot of that woman in her rage would be an

elegant possession. So you see I am talking about her, the very thing she dreaded, even without a picture!

One has to do a lot of reconstructing in his mind as he looks at Jerusalem if he hopes to get a historical perspective of the 3500 year old city, for one city lies under another. If one thinks he might be standing where Jesus stood, he must remind himself that Jesus would be standing at a level several feet below his level, that the Jerusalem of the time of Jesus lies buried beneath the present city. One can get the picture somewhat when he sees the diggings of the archaeologists. I looked *down* — way down — to see an ancient portico with a connecting wall that was being uncovered in an effort to ascertain the layout of the ancient city. Even more revealing is "the place called the Pavement" where Jesus was tried before Pilate. A nun guided me through the basement of the church that now stands where the procurator once sat in judgment against Jesus. Nearby in the same basement area is a remnant of one of the portals through which our Lord may well have walked. But all this is down under the present city, which is no more than a few hundreds of years old. There is not even one building standing that stood then, though it is believed that the present wall that surrounds the city is in some places built upon the foundations of the old one. One must remember that he is in a city that has been destroyed several times.

By fortuitous circumstance I came upon Jack Lewis while in Jerusalem, a professor at Harding College with whom I attended both college and university, and together we did several interesting things, the most notable of which was to walk through Hezekiah's tunnel, which was dug back in 700 B.C. This famous engineering feat, as impressive as any of ancient history, is mentioned in the Bible bur is described with some detail on the walls of the tunnel itself. The tunnelers began at both ends and cut through solid rock until they met each other. Jack and I with our flashlights found the spot midway through where the diggers met. King Hezekiah ordered this engineering job in order to bring water from the pool of Siloam in under the wall into the city in order to guarantee enough water for the people during the siege on the city by the Assyrians.

I was impressed with the Garden of Gethsemane, probably the authentic location. From the garden one can look across the Kidron valley to the Mosque of Omar, a Moslem sanctuary, that stands where Solomon's temple once stood, on Mt. Moriah. It is built over the rock where Abraham offered his son. I also found the ruins at Jericho interesting. Since a war is going on between Israel and Jordan, I had to stay on the Jordan side since I was to go on to Egypt, for one cannot go from Israel to an Arab state.

EGYPT AND EUROPE

I crowded Cairo into an already tight schedule in order to see the pyramids, and that is about all I did there. I sat for hours looking ar the three pyramids near Cairo, the famous Cheops being the largest and most impressive. It took 100,000 men working in 3-month

relays to build this giant tomb. It is truly a wonder of the world, for the way the huge stones fit together to form the impressive design is hardly credible, and this was done something like 5,000 years ago. “Time defies man, but the pyramids defy time,” was one statement I heard in a dramatic production called “Sound and Light” at the base of old Cheops.

I had time for a few hours in the national museum in Cairo where I saw a score of mummies that have been preserved for thousands of years. It seemed unreal to look at the well-preserved remains of queens and kings that lived 2,000 years before Christ.

Having only about ten days for Europe I could do no more than to see a few of the things I had always wanted to see. Three days in Athens, Greece gave me a studious look at the Acropolis. I especially enjoyed the Parthenon, taking time to read a book about it as I sat before it. The book explained that all the buildings of the Acropolis (which means “high city” and thus overlooks modern Athens) are but a dull reflection of the glory that was once theirs. The marble facades that once graced the Parthenon are now in London. I got to see them at the British Museum. The Greek government is insisting that they be returned to Athens in justice to history, but London does not see it that way.

I dined leisurely one evening at a quaint Greek restaurant below the Acropolis and spent the time studying the famous scene before me, now brilliantly illuminated by changing colors. I could imagine the beauty and attraction it once had, though one sees but the ruins now, for even now it is esteemed the most magnificent structure ever built. I recalled how Paul saw this very scene in the fulness of its glory, but his reaction was different, for “he was exasperated to see how the city was full of idols” (Acts 17: 16 NEB) I thought of how Socrates, who 400 years before Paul and who also looked at these same buildings and taught in the same streets, taught that for something to be beautiful it has to be appropriate. Even gold and ivory are not beautiful, he argued, unless they are appropriately used. Paul was close to Socrates on this score, for to him the magnificence of the Acropolis was overshadowed by the shame of idolatry.

I walked in the environs of where Paul stood, and I walked along the Forum where even yet remains of the idols Paul saw still stand. I noticed the place where the old philosophers had their schools, where Plato and Aristotle worked with the great problems of human thought, and where the Stoics and Epicureans forged their views of brotherhood. In my room that night I read the account of Paul’s visit to Athens in Acts 17 (New English Bible) and it was a thrill to my soul. I was also infatuated with the theatre of Dionysus where Greek drama was born, which is still somewhat preserved — at least some of the marble seats are. I made it a point to sit for awhile in the one that was always reserved for Emperor Hadrian, and there passed before my mind’s eye the splendor of the dramatic tragedies of Euripides, Sophocles, and Aeschylus (the one who invented tragedy by introducing the *second* actor) that once graced the stage before me. It was all in the open

air and the tragedies originally attracted thousands. The theatre is thought to have seated 20,000 at one time. The glory that was Greece!

My last day in Athens was about over when I met up with a student in an Athens college, who explained to me how proud he was to be a Greek, and he knew why too. I told him that I had seen the main things I had come to see, but that I had missed the prison of Socrates. That very hour I had returned from the Forum where democracy was born, where every citizen had not only the right to vote but the right to dissent. I had seen the Greek edition of "Sound and Light" and it was as if I had listened to Demosthenes himself. But I still had not had time to hunt up Socrates' prison, where a hero of mine taught men how to die by showing them how to live. This college student took me that very hour to see Socrates!

It was a fitting way to bid farewell to Greece. There I stood with a young man that was proud to be a Greek, one who knew what history had done for him, and one who could approach the place where Socrates died with a quiet reverence. In the distance was the Acropolis, shining brightly. I knew I had reason to thank God for the Greeks. It was as if I could hear Socrates say in his last hour the truth we are all too slow to learn: "No evil can befall a good man."

I spent most of my time in Rome walking about the city and visiting museums and basilicas. I took a long look at the Coliseum where the gladiators fought and where Christians were killed by lions. In stands in mute testimony that love can conquer the evil power of a Nero. The pope has erected a cross in the arena where the saints died. Gladiatorial games gave way to the force of Christian love. I also spent a half day at Vatican City in the rain. I watched with interest as a Swiss guard snapped to attention and saluted a cardinal who moved on toward the pope's well guarded quarters. It seemed to symbolize what has happened to Christianity since it first emerged in Rome.

I took only a day for Paris since I was running out of time, but I did get to see *Mona Lisa* at the Louvre, Leonardo's priceless painting. I had always heard of her enigmatic smile, so I wanted to see for myself. A crowd was standing before her while I was there, the famous lady that she is. I walked over much of Paris, taking buses when I wanted to rest. I wanted to see the spot where the Bastille once stood, so I dined at an interesting restaurant just across from that hallowed place. I remembered what men can and will do when they really want to be free.

In Germany I visited with my old friends, Dick and Nell Smith, in Karlsruhe, and in the same city called on the Roman Catholic orphanage that had been the home of my son Philip. They could not have been more courteous, and they were eager to know how Philip was doing in his new home in America. I took pictures of the nuns that had nursed our boy until he was nearly 6 years old, and of his playmates, and have shown them to him since my return. I spent a half day in Heidelberg where I visited the famous university (founded

1386) and walked in "the philosophers' way" on a nearby mountain, where philosophers have drawn the inspiration that helped to make German thought so productive. Hitler should have paused there. It might have changed history.

In London I saw the usuals, but the most impressive thing is what many might have missed: a small sign in Westminister Abbey that announced a meeting in which prayers were offered for Christian unity. The thought struck me that I have been brought up in a church that supposedly believes in Christian unity, but not once do I recall a prayer service or any other kind of service in behalf of unity. Of all places: Westminster Abbey!

At the risk of being late for the opening faculty gathering at Texas Woman's University, I stopped over in Glasgow long enough to get the feel of old Scotia, Robert Burns' native land. I attended worship at the Church of Christ there that practices "mutual ministry," which is not unusual for British churches. I also had time for a conference with Prof. William Barclay at the University of Glasgow. We talked about unity, and he explained that the churches in Scotland had reached an impasse in regard to unity over the question of the ministry. Scotland was the most delightful country I visited. If I could return to anyone of the 12 nations I visited for a year's sojourn, I would choose Scotland.

The big Scandinavian Airlines super-jet flew me to New York in just 7 hours. In New York I hurried through customs to my plane for Dallas. My long ticket that read "Dallas to Dallas" was now all used. I leaned back for a restful 3-hour flight home, and 10 and behold I found beside me one of my students at Texas Woman's University with all her Connecticut yankee charm, headed for her classes. It was the grand finale of a fabulous journey.

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OUR NEED FOR SELF-CRITICISM

The following speech was delivered by Robert Meyers to the Unity Forum which met in Dallas in early July, 1963. Many segments of the Churches of Christ, Christian Churches, and Disciples of Christ were represented at the meeting. The difference between the spoken and written word necessitated some very minor changes in the text.

Any dynamic group expects criticism from the outside, but criticism from within is always a shockingly different matter. A man's business acquaintances may chide him often without any real effect, but the strictures of his wife may be an intolerable thorn in the flesh. It is like this with religious groups. So long as rebukes come from beyond the party walls, some degree of reason tempers the response and the opposition is likely to get

courteous treatment. But when the criticism comes from one's own fellows within the walls, emotions explode and gentlemanly conduct may disintegrate in the blast.

Some of us within the Church of Christ segment of the Restoration Movement have felt it necessary to be critical of ourselves. We have come ro believe that because of our tightly-knit organization the only effective censures must come from the inside. Yet no matter how fair we may have tried to be, no matter with what reluctance we may have made the criticisms, we have heard this charge repeatedly: You have no right to expose the failings of the Lord's church to the sectarian world.

Some of us have heard this so often, and have had it impressed upon us in so may ways, that it seems worthwhile to attempt a reply. If we are indeed critical without justification, if we are merely venting spleen rather than exposing a hidden disease on the body of something we love, then we have no adequate reply. It is a duty to ourselves to ask whether we criticize in hope of improvement of a fine people, or whether we criticize because criticism has become a stimulant without which we cannot be happy.

I can state at once how I feel about all this. I am convinced that we cannot do the work we seek to do unless we first expose, however painfully, the weaknesses and inconsistencies which we in the Churches of Christ share with other religious groups. If those of us who criticize worked with a group famed for humility and recognition of their own faults, our problem would be different. But some of us have worked for years with Christians who have been taught to feel superior, to believe that they held all truth in their hands, and to look with condescension upon other believers. Until this group can be shown its kinship with other mortals, no plea for unity can ever hope to succeed, or, indeed even hope to be understood.

One of the great sayings of any century was spoken by Socrates some 400 years before Christ. "The unexamined life is not worth living." The philosopher was a great examiner of his own life, constantly subjecting his ideas to the insights of others to see whether they could stand the test of honest and intelligent opposition. Please turn the sentence in your minds for a moment, so that its enduring greatness may be completely absorbed: "The unexamined life is not worth living." The life unwilling to look at itself honestly, the life that escapes self-criticism by looking forever outward upon the defects of other men, is a life so poor in quality that one may be said not to be alive at all.

Now hear the words of a later and greater Teacher: "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye, with never a thought for the great plank in your own? . . . First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck Out of your brother's." There is no real difference between the truth spoken by the Greek and the truth spoken by the Son of God, except that the first statement is prose and the second is poetry. And the poetry, with its vivid metaphors and its rhetorical balance, makes the Son of God's utterance all the more memorable and piercing.

"First take the plank out of your own eye." I am talking tonight about the need for self-scrutiny, for self-examination, for honest and intelligent self-criticism, and this text gives me not only the justification for it, but tells me also something about priority. It answers the first question I want to raise about self-criticism: that is, when is it right to criticize one's own group?

My answer is that self-criticism must come *first*, before there is any criticism of others, and that having once been made, is should be repeated as often as necessary to guard against complacency and self-righteousness. This should be no surprise, because we expect no less than this from any gentleman. A gentleman is one who minimizes the failings of others while generously conceding his own. He lives in such poise that the recognition of his failures does not throw him off balance. The faults of others are no crutch upon which he must lean to keep his footing. He stands upright not because he is proud and arrogant, but because the burden of pretense and hypocrisy has been lifted from him.

What a gentleman does, a Christian gentleman ought to do better. But the sad truth is that many of us have grown up knowing how to analyze others, but refusing to analyze ourselves. We have talked knowingly of the motives of others, but seldom of our own. We have publicized gleefully the apostasies of other religionists, while we rebuked any who dared confess in public that we have our share.

And this excessive interest in the failings of others has blinded us to our own, and stunted our spiritual growth. We have often become *grotesques*, stumbling about looking for specks of sawdust while planks protruded from our own eyes, distorting and blinding our vision. If men of humor and intelligence occasionally laughed at us, we were too preoccupied with our fun to hear them.

I had a dear friend who taught in a Church of Christ college. He disliked reformers, but he seemed to appreciate saints. It was a while before I understood him. The reformer has his eyes fastened on the sins of his neighbors, and being only human, this preoccupation can cause him to forget the obstructions in his own eyes. It is not long before he is seeing badly. But the saint is embarrassed about his own sins; he has looked first within — and deeply. Seeing clearly what he is, his eyes are washed clean and clear to see better what the real needs of mankind are.

So then, self-scrutiny must come first. That is the *when* of it. We may consider the next question: Why examine ourselves? The answer has been suggested, but let's consider it at greater length. The simplest way to put it is that we *must* criticize ourselves in order to avoid corrosive pride. A man who sees himself clearly will not be misled about his worth. Whatever his talents, and however candidly he may be able to assess them, he will know his defects too well to grow the cancer of pride.

Most of us know why we concentrate so on the shortcomings of others. We get from that activity a sense of virtue which helps us forget the nagging in the back of our minds. We forget how often *we* are failures. We find some other believer deficient in ritual or understanding, so that the desert sterility of our own hearts will not burn us so.

We can do a great many good things for ourselves by honest self-scrutiny. We can learn how senseless and unChristian our race prejudices are. We can preserve ourselves from pride of social place, that "amazing pride," as Buttrick once put it, "which assumes that a man whose chairs are upholstered in velour can have no dealings with a man whose chairs are upholstered in plain board." The truth is that we stratify the church in hundreds of places on the basis of social position. Our only hope lies in confessing it, and being embarrassed about it.

We can save ourselves through self examination from the silly belief that our economic position is inevitably the result of our superior merits. Most of us can see after awhile that it is not so much that we are better than other men as it is that we have been luckier, blessed with better health, granted more timely opportunities. Pride vanishes, and one is humbled, to have been undeservedly fortunate.

We can save ourselves, although it is a little harder, from that arrogance which often accompanies some forms of intelligence and formal schooling. We can weigh the unschooled man's virtues against our faults, and remember that brilliance without morality or purified purpose is far worse than a barn full of poorly educated men who possess good will and honorable intentions.

But above all, self-examination can save us from Pharisaism in religion, that greatest single problem for most of us in my segment of the Restoration Movement. Pharisaism — that disease that drains the world of variety and causes the eye to see its own exaggerated image everywhere it looks — Pharisaism — that cancer which riots in the spirit as it feeds its swollen conceit. Pharisaism — about which Jesus spoke two of his most desolating words: "They have their reward," and, "Let them alone." The first because they sought a sense of superiority, and they found it; the second because they are beyond any help until the cruel plowshare of pain or loss has torn the hard ground of their pride apart and made a way for the seed of humility and the quickening rain of God's mercy.

Because many of my own people have been unwilling to submit to self-criticism, we exhibit to the world today some glaring inconsistencies. If I cared only to amuse myself about them, my proper course would be to keep laughing and say nothing about the cause of my laughter. But because I want to see them removed, I have to call attention to them. And because my people have been strenuously trained not to see their own defects, I am afraid that. we must sometimes shout to be heard. So that you may be in no doubt as to what I mean, let me cite some of the crippling pharisaisms in the group of Christians I know best.

We plead for *congregational autonomy* as the New Testament way, and we point happily to ourselves as practitioners. We invite all who are harassed by centralized authority to get relief by coming to us because we have no headquarters, national or international. But surely there are few present here who do not know that one may pay lip service to congregational autonomy and individual freedom while violating them both in many subtle ways. And "subtle" is not a synonym for "ineffective." It really does not matter in the least to me whether a board in New York tells me what to say and do, or whether the less obvious but equally effective pressure of church papers and the collective opinions of prominent names does it. In either case I have lost freedom.

In my city, the Christian churches of the "cooperative" persuasion withdrew from the advertisement box in the Saturday *Eagle*. Now there are two boxes, both listing Christian churches. It is embarrassing to some of them, because it indicates a lack of tolerance of differences. I could make hay of this in my non-instrumentalist pulpit, except for one embarrassing thing: the same thing has happened within the Churches of Christ. We list an anti-church all by itself, and 14 or 15 orthodox churches together, and then there is Riverside, in a box of its own — and not from choice.

We must make some serious attempt at self-examination on this matter, learning how much pressure groups mold opinion, how authoritative the voices of prominent preachers are, and to what a degree church journals mold and maintain opinions among us, before we laugh scornfully at our neighbors. As some of you have said in print, I also much prefer the open centralized authority and the written statement of faith to a hidden and hypocritical one. One may at least know where he stands, and can make appeal to some ultimately responsible object.

We like to talk of our *objectivity*. We are willing to see all sides, we say. We feature the testimony of those who claim to have investigated various religions and turned to us because all the others were lacking. I wish it were truer that we really try to see the other side. Eugene O'Neill has a play, *The Iceman Cometh*, in which an alcoholic named Larry sits at a bar and says to another beside him: "I was born condemned to be one of those who has to see all sides of a question. When you are damned like that, the questions multiply for you until in the end it's all question and no answer. As history proves, to be a worldly success at anything . . . you have to wear blinkers like a horse and see only straight in front of you."

These cynical words have an enormous amount of truth in them. It may sting a bit to paraphrase them as I am about to do, but self-criticism demands it. How many preachers have learned that to be a success, they must wear blinkers and see only straight ahead?

A striking example of this may be seen in a letter which I received recently from a young man who is both a Church of Christ minister and a Church of Christ college faculty member. He speaks of a desire to talk and says: "Many of the conclusions at which my

wife and I are arriving are ones which cannot completely be enclosed within the traditional Church of Christ frame-work. I am a young minister and I am aware of the necessity of caution in making religious decisions and changes, since many accuse younger men of 'going off the deep end.' Generally, it is not advisable to talk openly with ministerial or faculty colleagues concerning significant religious matters . . . It seems to me, though, that Christians composing free churches should always have this privilege." The incredible statement in this letter should be repeated: "Generally, it is not advisable to talk openly with ministerial or faculty colleagues concerning significant religious matters." This young man is no cynic. The whole tone of his letter disproves any such charge. But he knows that among his people it is dangerous to have new insights or try to share them with others. What an indictment of our vaunted objectivity!

Someone told me the other day of a well-known Church of Christ minister who was asked to teach a class on whether it was all right to use instrumental music. He said: "Very well, I'll teach it, but I can't promise how it will come out." There was instant objection to this, and the class decided that if he felt that way it would not go through with the study. They wanted to play at being objective, but they really wanted a controlled study that would move beautifully toward a pre-determined conclusion. The thought that all the evidence, or a more honest look at it, might modify that conclusion frightened them, and they gave up.

In a Vacation Bible School at Riverside recently we invited five speakers to address our adults in the evening sessions. They included a Mormon, a Lutheran Social Service Worker, a Methodist minister and mental health expert, a minister of Unity Church, and a Mennonite minister. This horrified most of our Church of Christ brethren in the city. It is all right for one of us to represent those faiths and services, but not for one of them to represent it himself in our midst. We prefer our objectivity to their bias, we would say. And of course it is not hard to know why. Like any other strongly convicted group, we consciously or unconsciously emphasize the weakest positions of those who differ with us, and minimize their strengths until it is clear to all that no sensible person could possibly believe that way. We do not *sympathetically* inform ourselves about the views of others, and so we are inevitably inaccurate. To see Presbyterianism through our presentation of it is not to see what appeals to those believers as it comes to them through the mind and lips of a convinced and intelligent Presbyterian. Our refusal to measure our best against their best, and to confess our weaknesses as no less obvious than theirs, is to put the lie to our claims of objectivity.

A year or so ago I read in the pages of one of our widely circulated church newspapers a story about some nuns at a Roman convent who disgraced themselves by getting into a fight. I think they even pulled at one another's garments and had to be subdued. The implication of this report in our paper was that here was proof of the perfidy of the Roman

Catholic Church. What else could you expect to come from a group in such hopeless error? It is no overstatement to say that I was appalled by this article. It bothered me more than anything I had seen in a long time. I thought of the psychological explanations for such outbreaks among people cooped up and closely associated for long periods of time. I remembered the sudden unreasonable fights that broke Out among my soldier colleagues in war time. I pitied the nuns, who undoubtedly were shamed and embarrassed because of their human lapse.

And then I remembered the Church of Christ minister in Texas who floored one of his elders with one punch, but whose lapse never got into the editorial page of this church paper. And the Church of Christ minister whose three-time robbery of a supermarket and subsequent prison term was never once thought of as proof that Church of Christism is a perfidious religion which could only be expected to turn out robbers.

And about then, the big Texas grain storage scandal broke. One of the most prominent Church of Christ members in Texas was at the center of it. Yet I looked in vain for any comment in this paper. The defections of a man who swindled hundreds, instead of merely pulling at someone's clothing, did not prove our religion wrong. I do not mean that we have to publicize the failings of our own. To throw the mantle of silence over their fall need not be wrong. But to say nothing of *their* defections and to trumpet loudly the defections of those who differ with us, is an abominable thing. To print gleefully the tales of a Baptist minister who runs off with a choir girl, but to keep conspiratorially mum about that minister of ours whose cottage meeting activities finally got him imprisoned for life for double rape, is to cheat against all rules of gentlemanly or Christian conduct. We absolutely must see ourselves clearly on this point, and stop using human failures among our religious neighbors as proof of their religious error, when human failures among our people are hushed up and forgotten.

And it is not different with respect to *unity*, the very theme of our conference. We plead for people in other religious groups to come Out and associate with us, so that there can be unity. We have the only proper basis for unity, we tell them, and we leave the impression that it has worked with us. We conceal that fact that our own group is split into 15 or 20 factions, each claiming to be the true church and each claiming to have the only right philosophy for obtaining and securing unity. We not only conceal it, but we castigate serve rely any who dare to tell it openly. I am convinced that Carl Ketcherside's most grievous sin is not that he has changed his mind, or even that he is persuasive, but that he has made it so embarrassingly clear how inconsistent we are. We can tolerate anything but that. The man who confesses humbly to his religious neighbor that we have not achieved unity in the Church of Christ, that we have split over music, over premillenialism, over colleges, over cups, that we are splitting now over church cooperation, and that we will split

tomorrow over something else, because we have a built-in splitting philosophy — that many may as well expect to be pilloried as one who betrays the Lord's church.

What can we conclude except that we are unwilling to examine ourselves honestly? That we live in a dream world, and prefer it to reality. I used to wonder why I did not see some things when I was a militant young preacher which seem so clear to me now. I think the answer is that I lived in a dream world. Have you ever been dreaming, a secure and pleasant little dream, and threatened to wake up? Some outside noise probed intrusively at your joy? Have you ever pulled the cover over your head, settled a bit more deeply into the pillow, and gone back into the dream by sheer force of will?

Well, I was able to do this religiously for awhile because I liked the way that had been mapped out for me. It was intoxicating to be patted fondly by older men and told that I would be a great defender of the faith some day, and it probably put me off from honesty by several years. I awoke out of my dream of a simple, uncomplicated way and an infallible set of interpretations to which all men might easily come if they just would, but I awoke reluctantly and with much pain. Self-examination is never pleasant at first.

I have asked and tried to answer these two questions so far: *When* should we criticize our lives, and *why*? Self-examination means a looking *in*, and I have said I think it is our only hope. But I am aware that introspection without some counter-balancing awareness can cause people to become morbid and even masochistic. How can one look *in* with such intense honesty and still keep his health? I think there may be an answer in this sequence: look *in*, and then look *up*. Remember that however much reason may help us to understand ourselves, we can only do that finally in the light of God's love for us. It makes no sense intellectually that He should love us, but if after I have gazed with troubled look into my own heart I can then step past reason and accept the fact of His love, I can live my life in a new dimension.

So then, after you have looked *in*, look *up* to find that God loves you in spite of what you have just seen in your own spirit. Then the wonderful thing happens. You can begin to look *around* at others whose defects have been so apparent to you, and you can say with deep conviction, "Yes, my friend, I know . . . I am weak like you. I have misunderstood, and betrayed my clearest insights, and failed to use my opportunities, and I am astonished to look up and find He still loves me. It humbles me, and I can see your failures now in a new light, a light from above. Perhaps he who loves me in my littleness and inconsistency, also loves you."

Look in, look up, and then you may safely look around. We began by quoting the words of Christ about the plank that gets so grotesquely in the way of our seeing compassionately and clearly. We can identify that plank now. It is lack of love for others, and too much love for one's self. I know this is so, because when I look at my child, whom I love, his splendid virtues shine like giant suns in my little universe, and his faults are like

specks of cosmic dust. Love makes all that difference in our seeing. If it didn't, God could not tolerate us when He looks at us from above. Jesus understood it when he said that to love is to pass from one world to another. Some of you here tonight live in a different world from the one you once occupied, and you live there, across that almost incomprehensible gulf, because you learned at last what it means to love others who seek to follow your Lord, however imperfectly.

I feel that my own people are in a critical time right now. A great change is in the air. Those who have vested interests, who would have to reverse a lifetime of word and action if they moved across to another world are fighting desperately to isolate my people from these ideas. They must preserve the system, because it is under the system that they have grown powerful and prominent and it is under the system that they can enjoy the heady excitement of guarding orthodoxy and punishing those who offend.

But as Tennyson's prologue to IN MEMORIAM says:

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day, and cease to be
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.

Our little system has had its day. We must stop talking about The Truth as if we possessed it in some tangible form and there were nothing else to break in on us. We are but broken lights, and our systems are but broken lights. It is our Lord who is whole. We are fragments. His *truth* is eternal, indivisible, and imperishable. Our *system* is our apprehension of that truth, forever partial and incomplete. The light has come into the world, but we have dark corners yet unreached. So have our friends. Let us be gentlemen, confessing our dark corners, acknowledging the light we see in others. If we do, our humility will breed humility in others, and with the party spirit diminished we may all move closer to the center where the light may flood us.

Perhaps all that has been said can be boiled down to this summary: We have emphasized modes and manners, legalisms and loopholes too much, and our unwillingness to see ourselves honestly has kept us from the self-knowledge that would save us. Our only hope for a breakthrough — I believe this profoundly — now lies in a greater possession of the gracious Spirit of Christ. That Spirit can teach us to be honest about ourselves and to be compassionate toward those whole failures are, after all, no worse than our own failures. The movements of that Spirit are now clearly to be seen among us and a brighter day is ahead. Nothing can stop the dawning, but we may see it sooner if we will desist from hunting specks in our neighbors' eyes and concentrate on the planks in our own.

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